

**Scott Campbell Brown, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services,
U.S. Department of Education**

Early Functional Outcomes of Low and Very Low Birth Weight Babies

The association of low birth weight at childbirth with poorer outcomes in childhood is well documented. The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS-B) offers a nationally representative study to enhance understanding at the *population level* for the association of low birth weight with poorer outcomes, employing both actual birth records for birth weights and the Bayley Short Form Research Edition (BSF-R) for assessments. This paper reports findings on the association of low birth weight with results for proficiency probabilities of the components of the BSF-R mental and motor scales at nine months and two years. This association is examined, considering gender, race/ethnicity, poverty and maternal education. A methodological exploration of properties of the BSF-R is also presented. The data indicate that 1) the low birth weight associations with outcomes dwarf any other social effect, 2) delays attributed to low birth weight decrease between 9 and 24 months of age as these children play catch-up with children of normal birth weight, 3) increasing inequality in outcomes as children mature between 9 and 24 months of age occur, as indicated by mother's education. Multivariate inclusion of socioeconomic variables *increases* the association of *moderately low birth weight babies* and developmental delay in months.